

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION

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FIFTH COMMITTEE  
27th meeting  
held on  
Thursday, 25 October 1979  
at 10.30 a.m.  
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 27th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIRSON (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative  
and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 104: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

(a) COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)  
(A/34/408)

1. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) recalled that when General Assembly resolution 33/143 had been adopted by consensus the previous year, his delegation had stated its interpretation of certain provisions of section II of the resolution. In particular, his delegation had made clear that where the resolution referred to target figures for recruitment, it meant targets and not quotas. The former was compatible with Article 101 of the Charter, whereas the latter, which was mandatory, was incompatible with the Charter. As that interpretation had been accepted in the negotiations which had led to the submission of the resolution, the United Kingdom delegation had been able to join the consensus on that understanding. However, it had had misgivings in the past year both about the Secretariat's interpretation of resolution 33/143 and about its method of implementing it. Moreover, there were passages and tables in document A/34/408 which seemed to give grounds for increased apprehension. But the introductory statement of the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services had been reassuring in that respect, and it was only right to give him both the benefit of the doubt and the chance to fulfil his task of implementing the resolution while conforming with the requirements of the Charter.

2. With regard to the recruitment question, paragraph 7 of the Secretary-General's report (A/34/408) stated that at least two out of every five candidates appointed "must" be from unrepresented or under-represented Member States. However, in paragraph 11 of the same report, relating to the recruitment of women, the word used was "should". In the view of his delegation, the latter formulation was the correct one if the recruitment guidelines were to conform with the spirit of the Charter. It was, of course, possible that two out of five highly competent recruits could in all cases be found from the right countries; but if they could not, reality must be accepted, even if it delayed the achievement of the objectives laid down by the General Assembly. The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services was doubtless well aware of that point, and that was why he had stressed in his statement that the Secretary-General did not regard the guidelines as a strait-jacket and insisted on being able to exercise the discretionary powers conferred upon him by Article 97 of the Charter.

3. With regard to the question of competitive examinations for selecting General Service staff for promotion to P-1 and P-2 posts, his delegation considered it impossible to reach a confident judgement on the matter without a full report from the Secretary-General on the content, scope and method of the proposed examinations, and the way in which the new system would affect the legitimate rights and expectations of the staff concerned. He was bound to draw attention to the evidence of disquiet and concern among the New York staff about the measures now proposed by the Secretariat. Over 1,300 staff had petitioned the

(Mr. Stuart, United Kingdom)

Secretary-General on the matter, and the conclusion was inescapable that that important question must be thoroughly considered by the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session on the basis of a report by the Secretary-General submitted through the International Civil Service Commission. In the meantime, all action to implement the relevant paragraph of General Assembly resolution 33/143 should be suspended.

4. Mr. GAHUNGU (Burundi) said that his delegation was grateful for the Secretary-General's efforts in the area of personnel, those relating to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 33/143 being recorded in document A/34/408, and those concerning amendments to Staff Rules in document A/C.5/34/7.

5. In the opinion of his delegation, personnel questions were no longer the exclusive concern of the powerful States. The system of geographical distribution should be improved, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 33/143, thus ensuring cultural and linguistic diversity in the Secretariat and making it a genuinely international civil service.

6. His delegation strongly disapproved of the anomalous situation of Africa in regard to the geographical distribution of posts. It was essential for the African countries to be represented in an equitable manner in the Secretariat and in the United Nations system. In fact, a number of Member States in the African region were not represented at all, and the group of over-represented countries was even on the increase. The situation was further aggravated by the fact that the Secretary-General had made appointments which gave a disproportionate advantage to States which were already over-represented.

7. Considerable satisfaction could be felt at the steps taken by the Secretariat for the 1979-1980 period to implement the provisions contained in section II of General Assembly resolution 33/143. However, the number of posts subject to geographical distribution remained insufficient. His delegation also supported the measures for the recruitment of young professional persons and for the improvement of their career prospects in the Organization, and he wished to encourage action by the Secretariat in that direction.

8. Mr. SERBANESCU (Romania) observed that, at a time when the United Nations had 152 Member States, when the range and complexity of its activities were continually growing, and when personnel costs amounted to more than 75 per cent of the regular budget, it was only to be expected that Member States should attach special importance to personnel policy. The basic concerns, reflected in resolution 33/143 adopted the previous year by the General Assembly, were to ensure equitable geographical distribution and to remove, as quickly as possible, the major quantitative and qualitative imbalances in the representation of all countries. Such imbalances were of a discriminatory nature and worked to the obvious disadvantage of many countries, especially the developing countries.

9. One fact which could be inferred from the Secretary-General's report (A/34/408) was the continuing existence of such imbalances in the representation

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in the Secretariat of the various countries, regardless of their geographical region. Of course, it could hardly be expected that radical changes would occur in the course of a single year, but it was nevertheless disturbing to note the recruitment patterns which seemed to emerge from the summary account in paragraph 6 of the report and from the tables. Appointments were continuing to be made at almost the same rate of nationals of countries which were already considerably over-represented or adequately represented. That was a situation which called for serious thought, and his delegation was convinced that the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services would be able to make the necessary adjustments, bearing in mind the position and special interests of the developing countries.

10. The Secretary-General's report gave prominence to the employment of women. In his delegation's view, all necessary attention should continue to be given to the problem, without however its being used to justify continued imbalances in the representation of Member States in the Secretariat. When women were appointed, regard should be had to the letter and spirit of General Assembly resolutions on the achievement of equitable geographical distribution.

11. The question of the relationship between the total number of staff in posts financed from the United Nations budget and the number of staff in posts subject to geographical distribution should be studied more closely. A casual reader would, in fact, have difficulty in understanding why, out of a total of nearly 10,000 posts, including General Service posts, only 2,800 were subject to the principle of geographical distribution. It was wholly anomalous that geographical distribution should apply to only a third of the staff, as if the other two thirds did not belong to the Organization and were not included in the budget. In such a situation, the concept of a "desirable range" was almost devoid of meaning. Measures should be taken to reduce the anomaly to acceptable proportions. The tables in document A/34/408 showing the representation of Member States should also show the total number of posts not subject to geographical distribution; otherwise it was impossible to get a clear idea of the true imbalances. If possible, the additional information should be made available during the present debate.

12. Paragraph 9 of the Secretary-General's report (A/34/408), which concerned the composition of staff at the senior level, recalled that in resolution 33/143 the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to "take further steps to increase the representation of developing countries at senior and policy-making levels during 1979-1980 in implementing the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly". In the light of that resolution and the discussions that had taken place the previous year in the working group set up to draft the text, his delegation felt that the interpretation given to the resolution in paragraph 9 was erroneous and, at best, likely to lead to confusion. In fact, resolution 33/143 did not mention distribution by region or regional group; it concerned the representation of developing countries regardless of their geographical location. Yet, the reference in paragraph 9 was to a resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 1966 which dealt with the distribution of seats on the Industrial

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Development Board not the representation of developing countries at senior levels in the Secretariat. It was questionable, therefore, whether the meaning of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 33/143 had been properly understood.

13. In conclusion, the Romanian delegation, without wishing to minimize the difficulties facing the Secretariat in so delicate an area, urged it to be stricter in its interpretation and implementation of the resolutions of the General Assembly.

14. Mr. THUNBORG (Sweden) welcomed the steps taken by the Secretary-General to improve the representation of women in the Professional category in the United Nations system. A more equal representation of men and women in all categories should be the ultimate objective. Sweden was working actively to overcome all factors of discrimination against women and to achieve equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities for women and men in the political, social, economic and cultural fields.

15. Turning to the budget of the United Nations, the Swedish delegation noted that various criticisms of the United Nations system had been made recently in the news media and in the Secretariat building. Constructive criticism was, of course, to be welcomed, but the articles that had appeared lately in the international press had often been based on a misleading interpretation of the facts. It was in the interest of all Member States that information published on the United Nations should give a correct picture of the Organization.

16. It was true that the United Nations system, not including the World Bank, IMF and the regional banks, had 44,000 permanent employees, and that it, like all other big organizations, was faced with the problems of a large bureaucracy. Comparing it with national bureaucracies, however, it should be noted that that figure was the same as the number of full-time employees at the central, regional and local levels of the Swedish Ministry of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The city of Los Angeles, with 2.7 million inhabitants, had had over 45,000 full-time employees in 1977. The staff members of the United Nations system were spread over 600 duty stations around the world.

17. The total expenditure of the United Nations system in 1978 had amounted to approximately \$2,952 million. Thus, the United Nations was not even entitled to a place on the current list of the 95 largest United States companies. The budget of the Swedish Ministry for Health and Social Affairs was four times bigger. The expenditure of the United Nations system for one year was equal to that spent on arms by Member States every two days.

18. The Fifth Committee was not only a budgetary Committee. It had an important political task to fulfil and it should not limit its efforts to controlling the growth of the United Nations programme budget. It should, of course, seriously scrutinize all the programmes, to see to it that they served their purposes and were carried out in the most effective way. Those programmes that were obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective should be abolished. Steps should be taken to secure efficient financial management of the resources available and to

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(Mr. Thunborg, Sweden)

introduce proper methods of evaluation. The Secretary-General should also be assisted in his efforts to ensure the establishment of an effective, stable and independent international civil service.

19. The main purpose of the United Nations was to maintain peace and security, and the peace-keeping missions of the United Nations had been set up to serve that purpose. As was well known, the financing of those operations had been a perpetual problem, and Sweden, as one of the countries contributing personnel to the peace-keeping missions, felt that when the maintenance of peace was being considered, there should be more talk about peace-keeping and less about bookkeeping.

20. When the United Nations took a political decision that had financial implications for the regular budget, it was the Fifth Committee's responsibility to see to it that the decision was carried out in the most effective and economical way. That did not mean that Member States should give unconditional approval to all programmes, but neither should the Committee establish a principle of zero growth, which might seriously hamper the flexibility of work programmes.

21. He wondered whether it was true that the major contributors to the regular budget of the United Nations carried too heavy a burden. The Swedish delegation was inclined to doubt it. To give an accurate picture of the financing of the United Nations, the assessed and voluntary contributions of Member States to the whole United Nations system should be taken into account. Total regular and voluntary contributions to the Organization, to peace-keeping operations and to the specialized agencies had amounted in 1978 to \$2,870 million. Regular contributions had accounted for \$1,096 million, as compared with \$1,774 million from voluntary contributions. Thus, the biggest share of the expenditure of the United Nations system stemmed from voluntary contributions. Moreover, although in absolute terms the United States was the biggest contributor, followed by Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, Norway and Denmark, on the basis of contributions per capita Norway was the largest contributor, followed by Sweden, Denmark, Qatar, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Canada, Switzerland (which was not even a Member) and Kuwait. In comparing total contributions - assessed and voluntary - the comparison should also be made on the basis of the capacity to pay of individual Member States. If contributions were calculated by percentage of GNP, the ranking of contributors was completely different; then Maldives was the biggest contributor, followed by Liberia, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Guinea-Bissau, the Gambia, the Netherlands, Guinea and Saudi Arabia.

22. The Swedish delegation was not, of course, an advocate of uncontrolled growth in the expenditures of the United Nations system. The Organization's budgetary policy could not stand in isolation from the financial preoccupations of Member States. Consequently, it was of the utmost importance to pay due attention to the utilization of resources already allocated to the United Nations. Programmes should be scrutinized with a view to obtaining maximum efficiency, and more emphasis should be placed on evaluating the current use of resources. In some cases, the results aimed at might be achieved without increased budgetary

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allocations. On the other hand, the work of the Fifth Committee could not be carried out in isolation from the important decisions taken within the Organization. Arbitrary budgetary limitations should not be used as an argument to abolish important programmes. If any conclusion was to be drawn from the statistics he had cited, it was that, while in absolute terms the contributions of some Member States were generous, in terms of their capacity to pay many other countries were more generous still.

23. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his country was in an unusual position, since it was both one of the most under-represented Member States and one of the largest contributors. His delegation, however, felt that the personnel policy changes should be given time to make their effects felt and that their implementation should not be interfered with too directly or too frequently. It seemed to have been agreed, after all, that the question should be considered only in the years when the Committee was not dealing with the proposed programme budget. For the present, all that needed to be done was to clarify certain points and exchange information. In its resolution 33/143, moreover, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the problem of the representation of Member States at its thirty-fifth session. It would be best to have confidence in the new Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services, who had unequivocally promised that he would implement the General Assembly's guidelines, and to consider the entire personnel policy in depth at the next session.

24. One of the most controversial subjects seemed to be that of promotion to the Professional category of staff in other categories. His delegation awaited with interest the replies the Secretariat would give to the questions on that matter raised by several delegations. It believed, however, that it was not so important to observe the date established for the competitive examination to be held for that purpose, mentioned in paragraph 18 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/34/408), as it was to safeguard the principle established by the General Assembly in that resolution.

25. The guidelines set by the General Assembly in that resolution were not incompatible with the Secretary-General's discretionary power to appoint staff, or with the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. The guidelines were, moreover, aimed at more equitable geographical distribution. The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services could, however, be requested to supplement the information in paragraph 7 of the report of the Secretary-General and to explain why the application of the guidelines had not facilitated the recruitment of more employees from the under-represented countries. The recruitment percentages were well below the target of 40 per cent set in the resolution. Did that reflect a tendency to perpetuate a well established distribution of posts? If there were other obstacles to be overcome, the Secretariat should so inform the Committee. In any case, all Secretariat departments and units should comply with the new recruitment policy, and all Member States should be treated equally. The real question that remained was to see whether the guidelines would stand the test of time. The question of geographical representation should be reconsidered as a whole during the general review to be carried out during the thirty-fifth session.

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(Mr. Schmidt, Federal Republic of Germany)

26. The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services had brought up a subject not mentioned in the documentation: whether the staff should be represented on the Fifth Committee. Obviously the Fifth Committee was not the most appropriate forum for the expression of the staff's views, but the staff should not be excluded from discussions on subjects of concern to them. The Secretary-General should hold consultations with his colleagues from other specialized agencies with a view to finding a solution to that problem, it being understood, however, that the staff should speak with one voice only.

AGENDA ITEM 98: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1980-1981 (continued)  
(A/34/6 and Add.1, A/34/7)

First reading (continued)

Section 3. Political affairs, trusteeship and decolonization (continued)

27. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the delegations of Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the United States had requested a separate vote on the appropriation requested in section 3.C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981.

28. At the request of the representatives of Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken on the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee in section 3.C.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republics, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

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29. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation of \$4,534,500 under section 3.C was approved in first reading by 93 votes to 5, with 9 abstentions.

30. Mr. LANDAU (Austria) said that, had his delegation been present during the voting, it would have voted in favour of the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee.

31. Mr. SADDLER (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote and on behalf of the delegations of Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, France and the United Kingdom, said that those Governments had always actively supported the principle of independence for Namibia, in accordance with Security Council decisions. They had, however, voted against the requested appropriation for strictly budgetary and economic reasons. In paragraph 3.27 of the proposed programme budget, the Secretary-General had explained that it was not possible at the present time to anticipate with any degree of precision the scope of the activities of the United Nations Council for Namibia; therefore, it would be equally impossible to predict the Council's expenses and those of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) Office. The delegations for which he spoke had extremely strong reservations concerning the financing of bodies that were not part of the United Nations system from the contributions of Member States to the regular United Nations budget.

32. Mr. KHAMIS (Algeria) said that his delegation had voted for the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee, although it regretted that it was not larger. His delegation was, moreover, surprised by the negative position taken by certain representatives concerning a problem that had been on the agenda of the General Assembly for a long time. It wondered whether those delegations did not have motives other than purely economic ones, especially since their Governments had held negotiations with South Africa and SWAPO. In his delegation's view, the United Nations Council for Namibia was the only body on which the General Assembly had conferred responsibility for representing the interests of Namibians wherever they might be.

33. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the total appropriation requested by the Secretary-General in section 3.

34. An appropriation of \$12,156,800 under section 3 was approved in first reading by 107 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

35. Mr. BRODININGRAT (Indonesia), speaking in explanation of vote, recalled that during the consideration of the medium-term plan for 1980-1983 his delegation had strongly protested the inclusion in the plan of activities involving East Timor. It had voted for the appropriation under section 3 recommended by the Advisory Committee, but continued strongly to oppose the inclusion of activities involving East Timor among the objectives set forth in paragraph 3.23 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 (A/34/6, vol. I). There was no question that the process of decolonization in that territory had been completed in 1976, with its formal integration into Indonesia, in accordance with the will

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(Mr. Brotodiningrat, Indonesia)

of the people of East Timor and the relevant General Assembly resolutions. The continuation of activities in that field not only was a waste of resources but also constituted interference in the internal affairs of a Member State.

36. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in keeping with its principles, his delegation had voted in favour of the appropriation under section 3 recommended by the Advisory Committee. However, it was still opposed to expenditures that would be higher for 1980-1981 than for the previous biennium. Moreover, it had reservations about the two post reclassifications requested by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 3.31 and 3.32 of the proposed programme budget. It had abstained in the vote on subsection C of the section under consideration because that request was unjustified.

Section 24: Regular programme of technical co-operation (continued)

37. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had already explained its position with regard to section 24 during the general debate. However, he wished to reiterate that his delegation considered it essential to draw attention once again to the fact that, in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter, the regular budget of the United Nations was exclusively administrative and, accordingly, should not provide financing for technical assistance; technical assistance should be financed exclusively by voluntary contributions.

38. The Soviet Union, in particular through its activities as a member of international organizations and bodies and through its broad programme of economic, scientific and technical co-operation, sought to promote the greater economic independence of the developing countries. The harmonious development of economic and technical co-operation between the Soviet Union and other countries was based on respect for the principle of mutually advantageous co-operation and for the interests of the partners concerned and on support for States struggling for their liberation. That was also one of the pillars of current Soviet foreign policy. At the Twenty-fifth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Kosygin had also stressed that the Soviet Union hoped to enjoy stable co-operation with the developing countries, based on a fair sharing of efforts and advantages. As a result, in 1978, trade between the Soviet Union and the developing countries alone had amounted to \$80 billion.

39. The developing countries derived many advantages from their co-operation with the Soviet Union, particularly in connexion with the gradual elimination of the current injustices in international economic relations and the material and financial possibilities of exploiting their natural resources for their own development. Such co-operation took into account the national development programmes of the countries concerned and was increasingly based on long-term intergovernmental agreements, and even on long-term sectoral development programmes. The Soviet Union extended credit and loans under very favourable conditions, particularly to the newly independent States. It provided technical and economic assistance to 63 developing countries, thus helping them to develop their national industries; such assistance was provided, inter alia, by sending

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(Mr. Palamarchuk, USSR)

experts, material and equipment, and also included training programmes. Accordingly, his delegation thought that any economic and technical assistance provided under the auspices of the United Nations should be financed exclusively by voluntary contributions from States. In its opinion, the regular budget of the United Nations should not include appropriations to finance technical co-operation; such appropriations, far from being eliminated, should be incorporated in the budget of the United Nations Development Programme, as several delegations, including his own, had requested in the past. It was incomprehensible that that proposal should encounter opposition from certain Member States.

40. His delegation would therefore vote against the appropriations requested under section 24 of the proposed programme budget on the one hand, because, it considered that the regular programme of technical co-operation should be financed exclusively by voluntary contributions and, on the other hand, it could not agree to the approval of appropriations for which the Secretariat had not provided any breakdown or indicated the objectives the attainment of which those appropriations were intended to make possible.

41. His delegation thought that if those appropriations were transferred to the UNDP budget, a better utilization of resources would be achieved, and that that would be in the interests of the developing countries themselves, because it was not convinced that the appropriations in question would, under current circumstances, actually be devoted to technical assistance activities. Accordingly, it asked the Fifth Committee to reconsider that problem as well as its proposal concerning the transfer of those appropriations to the UNDP budget.

42. Mr. GOSS (Australia) said that his country was not opposed in principle to including in the regular budget appropriations for technical co-operation activities, but it felt that the lack of information about the appropriations requested for section 24 was most regrettable. However, the figures provided bore out forcefully the remarks his delegation had made during the general debate on the question of the method used in drawing up the proposed programme budget. For example, the revised appropriations for 1978-1979 under section 24 totalled about \$23.5 million. If the rate of inflation for the past two years and the next two years could be estimated at 10 per cent, the expenses actually incurred, in real value, during the previous biennium would be the equivalent of slightly less than \$25 million, which reflected a real growth of \$2.4 million or approximately 10 per cent. His delegation noted that the Fifth Committee was thus actually being asked to approve appropriations which, in real value, reflected a real increase of approximately 10 per cent.

43. Mr. AYADHI (Tunisia) said that his delegation too regretted the lack of information about the activities that were to be financed by the appropriations requested under section 24 and the poor presentation of that section. However, his delegation did not think that one could regret the fact that no justification had been given for the appropriations requested and at the same time question the very merits of that section. In view of the interpretation which had been put

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(Mr. Ayadhi, Tunisia)

forward of Article 17 of the Charter, it would be prepared to suggest that the Fifth Committee should consult the Legal Counsel on that question. Reminding the Committee of the wording of Article 17, he observed that there was nothing in it about exclusivity and that the budget of the United Nations, like any budget, was intended to cover expenses related to the activities of the Organization, which included economic and social co-operation. He also drew attention to Article 13 of the Charter, which contained a reference to Chapter IX (International Economic and Social Co-operation), which in Article 55 stated that "the United Nations shall promote higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development"; his delegation considered that the provision of technical co-operation was certainly one of the normal functions of the Organization.

44. It was true that co-operation could be either bilateral or multilateral at the level of the United Nations. The representative of the Soviet Union had described the conditions on which bilateral co-operation between the Soviet Union and 63 developing countries, including Tunisia, was based, but that did not mean that all co-operation should be bilateral, for that would be too great a departure from the spirit and the letter of the Charter. It was imperative, especially for the young, newly independent nations, to be able to benefit from United Nations assistance through the most rapid and direct channels. Accordingly, his delegation would not agree to the exclusion of technical co-operation activities from the activities of the Organization. In that connexion, it noted with satisfaction that the Government of the United States of America had withdrawn its instructions that its delegation should not approve the appropriations requested for section 24; that step reflected the general feeling of the General Assembly, which wanted expenditures for technical assistance programmes to constitute de facto obligatory contributions for all Member States. In conclusion, his delegation reiterated that section 24 had rightly been included in the regular budget of the United Nations.

45. Mr. JASABE (Sierra Leone) said that his delegation recognized that there was not enough information from the Secretary-General about the appropriations requested in section 24 but thought that the reason might be the concern to limit the already very extensive documentation before the Committee. Section 24 dealt with a programme designed to complement assistance available from other sources for the development of the developing countries and to make possible the implementation of the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council. The Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, which had been established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/197 and which had submitted its first report in April 1979, had given tangible expression to the intent of the General Assembly to exercise its operational responsibilities with respect to technical co-operation. Its efforts were aimed at strengthening the self-sufficiency of the developing countries within the framework of the strategy for the establishment of the new international economic order. The Department had a dual role to play: first, to improve the traditional modalities for the provision of technical assistance and, second, to prepare for the transition to the future.

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(Mr. Jasabe, Sierra Leone)

46. The success of the technical co-operation activities of the United Nations in various fields served to confirm the need to continue to make provision in the regular budget for the financing of such activities. The regular programme of technical co-operation was an essential complement to the technical co-operation activities carried out by other sectors of the Organization. It was currently responsible for the increased provision of interregional advisory services to Governments and for the implementation of programmes of high priority within the framework of the establishment of the new international economic order. It was essential to enhance the capacity of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development through the regular programme, in particular for short-term assistance.

47. His delegation was somewhat surprised at the positions adopted by a number of delegations and hoped that the Committee would nevertheless reach a consensus of some kind regarding the financing of the regular programme within the framework of the regular budget of the Organization.

48. Mr. DE FACQ (Belgium) said that his delegation had never objected to the inclusion of funds for technical co-operation in the regular budget of the United Nations. Nevertheless, as there was no specific justification in the proposed programme budget for the use of the substantial sum of \$27,248,100, it would find it impossible to vote for such an appropriation. It would therefore abstain in the vote.

49. Mr. GUBCSI (Hungary) said that in the view of the Hungarian People's Republic - which itself furnished technical, economic and scientific assistance - technical assistance should be financed by means of voluntary contributions and should not be included in the regular budget. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee, giving no clear reason for such action, had, without making any recommendations, transmitted the estimate under section 24 so that an appropriate decision could be taken. His delegation therefore could not vote for the appropriation requested in section 24.

50. Furthermore, his delegation would like to receive a detailed explanation of the utilization for the benefit of the developing countries of the revised appropriation for 1978-1979, amounting to \$23,664,100.

51. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that his country was in favour of technical co-operation. According to the statistics circulated by the delegation of Sweden, Italy had made voluntary contributions in 1977 in the amount of \$8 million. Moreover, the Minister for Foreign Affairs had announced that Italy would double the amount of its official assistance to development in 1980 and would cancel the debts of 10 of the least developed countries. However, for practical and technical reasons, his delegation would abstain in the vote because it was opposed to the duplications which were evident throughout section 24. He wondered whether it might not be possible to remove the difficulties the Committee was having in that connexion by merging section 24, entitled "Regular programme of technical co-operation", and section 7, covering the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development. The slight difference between the titles

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(Mr. Majoli, Italy)

of those two sections was not easy to grasp. As in 1977, his delegation was not satisfied with the methods of financing technical co-operation. The difficulties resulting from the inclusion of such appropriations in the regular budget, against the will of some of the major donors must be avoided in the future.

52. Mr. JAWAD (Iraq) expressed his delegation's satisfaction at the part of the report of the Advisory Committee which dealt with section 24. It was not opposed to the inclusion in the regular budget of appropriations designed to increase assistance to developing countries always provided that there was detailed justification for the manner in which such resources were used. The policy of Iraq was to offer direct assistance and unconditional loans to friendly developing countries so that they would not be obliged to submit to the unjust conditions attached to aid from the imperialist countries.

53. His delegation would like to know why the Secretary-General had abandoned the practice of not proposing any changes in the amounts involved in section 24 and of leaving such changes to the initiative of the General Assembly, as paragraph 24.2 of the report of the Advisory Committee indicated.

54. Mr. RUEDAS (Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services) took note of the dissatisfaction expressed by a number of delegations regarding both the presentation of section 24 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 and of the justifications provided by the Secretary-General. In reply to the requests for clarification put forward by the delegation of Italy, he said that as section 24 concerned expenditures relating to operational technical co-operation it could include no permanent posts since none existed. The appropriations financed the services of experts and consultants, seminars, fellowships and the supply of material. However, it might well be asked who managed the appropriations included in section 24 if no permanent post existed. Table 7.1 of the proposed programme budget set out the costs of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development for substantive and administrative services as well as operational projects. Explanatory note (b) to that table pointed out that the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development was also responsible for the execution of the regular programme of technical co-operation as indicated in section 24, paragraph 2.

55. The comment had been made that the Department did not include a unit having specific responsibility for the execution of the regular programme of technical co-operation. The Department was, however, being restructured. Its present structure was based on a functional division and not on a division according to sources of finance.

56. With regard to the inadequacy of the reasons put forward in support of the estimate submitted under section 24, concerning which a number of delegations had voiced concern, it should be emphasized that the proposed programme budget was not the only source of relevant information in the United Nations system. The Secretary-General submitted annually to the Governing Council of UNDP a report containing detailed information on the regular programme of technical co-operation, covering in particular objects of expenditure, expenditure according to origin of resources and expenditure by type of activity. In that report expenditure was

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(Mr. Ruedas)

also broken down by component: experts, consultants, training activities, equipment and miscellaneous expenditure. Moreover, the Administrator of UNDP prepared a report in which, inter alia, expenditure under the United Nations regular programme was broken down by country and region. There was also relevant information in the accounts and financial statements of the United Nations, in the form of breakdowns of expenditure. However, one way of keeping the Committee informed was the continuous dialogue between the Secretariat and the Member States which directed its activities. Pointing out that the presentation of section 24 in the preceding proposed programme budget, for 1978-1979, which was essentially the same, had not given rise to any objections, he assured the Committee that the next proposed programme budget would include the detailed information that seemed to be lacking in the documents before the Committee.

57. The CHAIRMAN said that since he had had an opportunity to see for himself how enormous the needs of the developing countries were on all five continents, he had no difficulty in suggesting that the Committee should approve the estimate of \$27,248,100 transmitted by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. However, it must be recognized that the presentation of section 24 was inadequate. The programmes had not been described correctly. The fact that the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination had not considered them because the Secretariat had not made the proposed programme budget available to it on time was an aggravating circumstance. For the Committee, it was more a question of an act of faith than of adopting specific programme components.

58. The Committee counted on the Secretariat to see that the next proposed programme budget contained detailed information by programme, subprogramme and programme component. If it could not have complete data on section 24 at its disposal before the end of the session, it might consider making a point of drawing the attention of the Joint Inspection Unit, in its report on the programme budget as a whole, to the section in question. It could also draw the attention of the Board of Auditors to the accounts for 1978 and 1979, which were to be considered at the beginning of 1980. The Committee could thus obtain some of the information that it lacked.

59. A recorded vote was taken on the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General under section 24.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Finland, Gabon, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia,

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Spain, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, France, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Belgium, Canada, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mongolia, Poland.

60. An appropriation of \$27,248,100 under section 24 was approved in first reading by 96 votes to 10, with 7 abstentions.

61. Mr. SHIOGUCHI (Japan), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation subscribed to the view that the regular programme of technical co-operation should in principle be financed by means of voluntary contributions. In accordance with that policy, his Government was, in fact, increasing its voluntary contributions, particularly to UNDP. It was therefore regrettable that the estimates submitted for 1980-1981 showed an increase of 15.1 per cent as compared with the revised appropriations for 1978-1979. For those reasons, and in view of the inadequacy of the information on the regular programme of technical co-operation, his delegation had abstained in the vote.

62. Mr. MAROTO (Spain) said that although his delegation had voted in favour of the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General under section 24 it was none the less dissatisfied with the quality of the information supplied under that section of the proposed programme budget. As several delegations and the Chairman of the Committee had observed, that section did not contain the data that the Committee was entitled to expect of a budget worthy of the name, and that situation must be remedied without delay.

63. Moreover, the Committee had been deprived of the valuable opinion of the Advisory Committee, which indicated in paragraph 24.5 of its report that it was confining itself to transmitting the estimate to the General Assembly. It was not desirable that such a situation should occur again.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.